

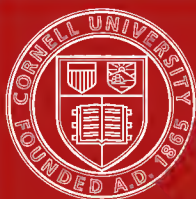
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THE GIFT OF
TWO FRIENDS
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Buddha (written 1891-1895) a drama in two



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BUDDHA

(Written 1891-1895)

A DRAMA IN TWELVE SCENES

BY

SADAKICHI HARTMANN

AUTHOR'S EDITION

NEW YORK

1897

SYNOPSIS.

- SCENE I. THE SHORE OF DRIFTING SAND.
- “ II. ON THE BANKS OF THE GANGES.
- “ III. A VILLAGE STREET.
- “ IV. THE TEMPLE OF RENUNCIATION.
- “ V. THE LAKE OF INDIVIDUAL ARISTOCRACY.
- “ VI. A BATTLE FIELD.
- “ VII. AT THE FOREST'S EDGE.
- “ VIII. THE VALE OF REST.
- “ IX. THE CAVE OF DAWN.
- “ X. AT THE BOUNDARY OF PERPETUAL SNOW.
- “ XI. SUMMIT OF THE HIMALAYA.
- “ XII. DARKNESS IN SPACE.

Time : About 500 B. C.

Dedicated to Those Who,
Far away from the Multitude,
Climb Parnassus on,
Precipitous Paths.

SADAKICHI HARTMANN was born at Nagasaki, Japan, in 1867. He was educated at Hamburg and Kiel, in Germany, and after traveling extensively and studying art in Munich, Berlin, Brussels, Paris and London, he became an American citizen, 1891. He is well known as a writer, both of verse and of prose. His *History of American Art* was published in 1901.

B U D D H A .

SCENE I.

*SHORE OF DRIFTING SAND. VIEW ON THE OCEAN.
MOONDAWN.*

GAUTAMA asleep on the dunes. A train of camels approaches. The former silence seems to be heightened by the cautious, gliding, indolent steps of the camels, to which the waves murmur a faint accompaniment.

GAUTAMA. (*Awakes, and gazes motionless, as if still dreaming, on the silent procession—ghost-like as their flitting shadows—until the last camel has disappeared in the greenish distance.*) As human life should be! Art's fragrance wafted by, that in orgasmic joys incessantly dissolves life's ambiguity.

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.

ON THE BANKS OF THE GANGES.

To the left, through a rich confusion of white and scarlet rhododendron trees, interspersed with luxuriant tropical growth, silvery glimpses of the river ; in the centre a hill, over which a reddish road ascends from the right. Drowsy, vibrating light of noontide. Now and then, a sluggish draught moves gently through the scene, and the trees shake dreamingly their leafy crowns.

BAYADERES: LAGUDA, DAVKUNA, ZEANA and VAIVASVATA (*enter; their golden girdles glitter as they make their way through the jungles*).

LAGUDA. A day bewildering and fervent sweet !

DAVKUNA. The sun progresses to his height of passion ; all flowers fade beneath his violence.

ZEANA. Not a snake or lizard sparkles in the ferns and moss.

DAVKUNA. No incantation of an iridescent bird is sounding.

ZEANA. The gnats alone perform their tremulous dance.

DAVKUNA. The water beckons with fragrant calm.

VAIVASVATA. Why do you undrape so hastily ?

LAGUDA. To come in contact with nature. It is as if the dust of daily toil were falling from my body, and I became a better and purer being when naked.

VAIVASVATA. I like to unsheathe myself, slowly, softly, one by one, with long intervals. (*Breaks a flower and looks into its chalice, lost in contemplation; butterflies of every conceivable hue flutter around her.*)

LAGUDA. (*Throwing off her last garment.*) No, I must drink in nature, like a thirsty babe its mother's milk; inhale light and air with every sense, feel at once the water's full embrace and allow its resilient waves to caress and kiss me without truce—without rest—without end. (*Runs off*).

DAVKUNA. (*Looking after her.*) What a streak of light!

ZEANA. Brightest bit of color imaginable! The despair of painters.

DAVKUNA. Laguda has unfastened her auburn hair. Now, she will duck. Look—a nymph disappearing in the waves of her own dishevelled hair!

VAIVASVATA. (*To the flower.*) Like a sister soul whose rhythmic breath of unavowed desires deflowers all the pregnant sounds of passion!

PRINCE BERUSANI, his tutors NINDAR and SUDOTANA, and SENNA, attendant (*appear on the highway*).

PRINCE BERUSANI. Is this their trysting place?

SENNA. Like moving statues they nudeate. Transparent clouds pass softly over heaven.

NINDAR. Then shade your eyes, for you will be mad with desire; a sunray struggling golden through the grey of clouds seems more triumphant than the sun of love itself.

PRINCE BERUSANI. Wherefore restraint upon restraint? All animals delight in mutual fellowship—the plants sway to and fro each other, even the rocks bend towards the sun and heave their granite souls up to the moon—why should not men and women consecrate their spring by love!

SUDOTANA. Because it merges man in countless troubles and vexations,

ZEANA. There is no doubt that we are the four most roseate rorulent love maidens in the district.

DAVKUNA. (*To Zeana.*) Chaste furies of diurnal storms have carved thy tapering limbs.

ZEANA. Vaivasvata is beauty's queen.

VAIVASVATA. My body is too luxuriant, deep and cold.

ZEANA. (*To Vaivasvata.*) In warlike hemispheres thy body's soul reveals itself.

DAVKUNA. Then her abdomen, long and bold, melodious warm, and chastely vaulted ! In ruined rhythms flow the lines of mine.

VAIVASVATA. And lies the garden of thy love forlorn !

ZEANA. Who carves in ivory the ardent silver of her lily breasts?

DAVKUNA. Upon whom, I wonder, would Prince Berusani bestow his flaming kiss ?

ZEANA. Beauty blurs by dew of love and sighs of passion. (*Picks up a handful of broken petals.*) Behold, can thy languid eyes discern which one was blown by winds of night, on seas of love between thy pleasure lips?

VAIVASVATA. (*Sits as if thinking of past experiences of love.*) Scented winds blow gently, kiss my nakedness and scatter flower leaves and pollen dust upon my trembling self.

DAVKUNA. (*Rests herself on a rock.*) I like to sit on hot stones, and full of devotion adore the beautiful, odorous summer day. It intoxicates me like Soma wine. (*Smiling; her lustrous eyes half closed.*)

ZEANA. (*Laughs.*) What queer little waves tumble over the pebbles and pet my soles. This is heavenly ! The lapping of the waves, the distant noises on the highway, the whispering of the tree-tops ! The birth of slumbering varicolored songs !

DAVKUNA. (*Staggers into the water.*)

VAIVASVATA. (*Naked.*) What harmony of lambent sounds each movement of the body lilt ! Ah, to sing and dance the raptures of love in this realm of light ! (*Makes a few dignified steps while humming a festive air.*) Proudly I step into the cool and tempting flood. What a beautiful reflection I make in the water !

PRINCE BERUSANI. The water puris from her limbs as from the shining petals of the water lily without leaving trace. For her I could put my hands into a furnace.

NINDAR. Believe me, oh Prince, each urn of love is filled with filth or poison. These women are like fruit before its fall : luscious and over-ripe. Behold them lolling with themselves at night, engulfed in twilight blanks of ruined flowers, fallen gems, and finery unthrilled by lute and tambourine ; you'll awake from your dream and, in the nauseous atmosphere of amorous vulgarity, see womankind deprived of her fictitious love-breath charms. One has earth drawn breasts that no babe can suckle ; another suggests in

wrinkles the vapidness of fat senility; a third one's face reveals in sleep the ugliness of her soul.

PRINCE BERUSANI. Is it always the body which we love?

SENNA. No woman will refuse you the enjoyment of her soul. Yet taste her body first to test whether your love be really searching for her soul.

PRINCE BERUSANI. Well spoken, Senna; let these buddhas talk; we two shall act.

SUDOTANA. Though men know that to enjoy woman means distress, they are ever impatient for new follies for their sake.

PRINCE BERUSANI. Now they shake liquid pearls from hair and limb. Let us sweep down like lovelorn winds on high-stalked flowers and search for bliss in dim treasure caves amidst liquescent wilderness! (*Tearing the obstructing branches apart.*)

GAUTAMA (*appears; murmurs in a monotonous, long-drawn, hypnotizing voice, repeating every sentence three times, as he slowly passes on*). Renounce! Humanity, renounce all confident conviction in yourself! Struggle for the cessation of sorrow, become ensouled in me: the Sublime Renunciation, The Non-God. (*Exits.*)

SENNA stares enquiringly at PRINCE BERUSANI, who gazes motionless after GAUTAMA. NINDAR and SUDOTANA stand in ecstasy, hushed by the mystery of soul concussion. The bayaderes, exhaling tremulous diffidence and broken indecision, have seized some of their garments and hide behind foliage, only VAIVASVATA looms up radiant in triumphant monotony.

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.

A VILLAGE STREET.

Change of scene produced by moving scenery.

PRINCE BERUSANI, followed by NINDAR and SUDOTANA (*whose faces show the dull, stereotype smile of Indian statues, walk along the street*).

OLD MAN. (*Collecting dry dung.*) Alas—alas—alas!

BERUSANI. Why do you sigh so pitifully?

OLD MAN. Pick up dung yourself, and you will know why.

BERUSANI. Imagine that it is an agreeable and remunerative occupation.

OLD MAN. Are you one of those poets who make gold of camel's dung? I have no use for them. Don't babble any more. I won't understand your parables. (*Continues his work.*) Alas—alas—alas!

BERUSANI. How stupid to live in these little houses, when one can have the whole universe as abode. Human beings are the queerest things in creation.

A FATHER stands at the threshold of a cottage. A beautiful mother fondles her child.

BERUSANI. (*Steps up to them.*) Do not be too happy; calamities may come at any moment. Your husband may play false, or your sudden death may leave the child to strangers.

FATHER. Go along, you philosophizing mendicants. Don't frighten a little woman, or I'll try my fist on your shaven crowns.

Two PARIAS with cramped limbs and swollen bellies
crawl through the dust.

1st PARIAS. Pray, give me more than you can spare !

2nd PARIAS. Don't be clutched-fisted. Offer a sacrifice to poverty, personified in me !

BERUSANI. We have less than you. You see we are satisfied and do not make such faces.

1st PARIAS. You are healthy, while we—ah me, what pain !

BERUSANI. Console yourselves; we wear a girdle of thorns around our waists. (*Shows his thighs, on which blood drops are visible.*)

2nd PARIAS. They are mad. Ah me—what pain !

JUGGLER showing his tricks to the crowd.

BERSUANI. You are the symbol of humanity !—Juggling, juggling, always juggling; trying to stand on your heads for no earthly reason whatever; dancing on ropes and listening to soothsaying.

JUGGLER. Get out of the way, and don't spoil honest people's business.

In the next cottage a STUDENT is seen writing.

HIS FATHER. (*Proudly.*) Look out for him; some day he will be a great buddha.

BERUSANI. Do not cudgel your brain, poor fool, your mental gravity will cause neither revolution nor enlightenment. I fear you cannot even comprehend that, alone, the mind which—were it but for one short hour—reigned ubiquitous in other souls, still conscious of itself, could discard the partiality of self and gain omniscience among man. Poor drudge !

STUDENT. Ruffian, you dare ! I forget myself. Seers who describe the indescribable should suffer martyrdom in indestructible passivity.

DEALER counts his money in a little store.

BERUSANI. If you lay aside as much as that each day, you will soon be a worthy partisan of wealth.

DEALER. (*Chuckles.*) Yes, I have laid by a goodly sum.

BERUSANI. Some night robbers might break into your house

and kill you; of what use would your coins then be to you except to be smelted into an urn for your ashes?

DEALER. (*Raking up his money.*) Help! Thieves, robbers!

BLIND MAN. (*Passes by.*) Have pity with the blind man! Tell me where I am.

BERUSANI. Dear friend, none of us knows where he is. Men do not even know where this world is floating in the universe.

BLIND MAN. What are you mumbling about? Do you take me for a fool? Can I not hear, taste, smell, feel what others see?

An OLD MAN, toothless, trembling upon his stick, leers at a young girl, who walks with an affected, rocking gait.

BERUSANI. Are you not ashamed of yourself, old, dissipated wretch?

OLD MAN. (*Grins, pointing after the girl.*) At the first glance I espy the most hidden lines.

BERUSANI. Are you not old enough to know that the lusts of man are like sea water? mocking man's thirst instead of quenching it.

OLD MAN. (*Grins; leaning forward on his stick, he falls down.*)

WOMAN. (*Beats her breast, tears her hair, and casts away her jewels.*) Woe is me! Woe is me!

BERUSANI. What woe has befallen you?

WOMAN. My lover has left me.

BERUSANI. Weep, as the years gyrate, or search for other currents consanguineous in love to yours.

NINDAR and SUDOTANA stop spellbound for a moment at the sight of a barber shaving the head of a child. NINDAR stares at the bald head of the child, SUDOTANA at the razor glistening in the sun; thereupon both pursue their way, their faces having completely changed expression and become illumined as if by a new idea.

A corpse lying on a bier is carried out of the village; lamenting women follow it.

BERUSANI. Why do you whine, as if you were losing your wits, over one who is no more, or attained a state of future bliss? Why do

you not dance and sing, and feast ? They hate death, and yet wish to be reborn in another world ! (*Leaving the village.*) What are you searching for in the grass ?

YOUNG GIRL. For flowers hitherto unknown.

NINDAR and SUDOTANA for the first time nod approval.
In the distance loom a row of gigantic pagodas.

NINDAR. Fare thee well, oh Prince. Here our ways do part.

SUDOTANA. Never to meet again, I hope.

NINDAR and SUDOTANA. You wend your way from whence we came.

BERUSANI. And whither will your future lead ?

NINDAR and SUDOTANA. To flowers hitherto unknown. (*Exit.*)

BERUSANI. Must I fain meander through this labyrinthian life alone !

CURTAIN.

SCENE IV.

THE TEMPLE OF RENUNCIATION.

Court corner in a cave temple (as Menzel might paint it), with shrines, images and basins for holy water. Crowds of worshippers; some turn praying wheels. Bell-ringing. Sombre atmosphere. *A Double Choir* performs the majestic hymn of painful exuberance : "Let good will without measure prevail among beings. Even in this world holiness may be found."

LAGUDA, DAVKUNA, ZEANA and VAIVASVATA, robed in opal and celadon, listen.

LAGUDA. Like surging waves these mighty rhythms rush upon me !

ZEANA. As a high-stalked flower trembles in the wind, listlessly I sway hither and thither under the currents of these fierce and pregnant melodies. I fain will die, if not a simpler chord, on which my life is set, sounds forth. (*Listens as if time and space were gone.*)

DAVKUNA. (*Like a back-blown, dew-pearled flower.*) Meseems that lilies sprout upon lutescent hills and in the deepest depths of forest-wilds. Oh, fleeting moments of voluptuous pain !

VAIVASVATA. Oh, knights of heaven, come, redeem me from the throes of continence, squandering our energy to act like men.

The singing ceases. The stewards, though dressed like princes, converse steward-like to GAUTAMA, leaning against a colossal Bangalore. A magnificent procession

passes by: incense and flower bearers, shaven priests in gorgeous vestments, monks and nuns of the Huge Convent, with fans, lamps, sacred vessels, etc., etc.

SECOND STEWARD. All is over now.

THIRD STEWARD. He has really squandered his kingdom. Who would have believed it?

FIRST STEWARD. And what a festival it was!

THIRD STEWARD. Since its beginning, darkness devoured the moon some twenty times.

SECOND STEWARD. (*To GAUTAMA.*) It would have probably changed your system of meditation, you old hypocrite. Fifty kings from shore and mountain-land and the vast plains attended; none as magnanimous as he.

THIRD STEWARD. They came in four-horsed chariots of gold and precious stones; the parade of their retinue often lasted six hours.

FIRST STEWARD. One procession of white elephants was one mile long. You never heard such trumpeting before.

SECOND STEWARD. And the horse sacrifice! By all that is glorious!

THIRD STEWARD. More splendid pavilions of pleasure never were pitched upon the banks of the Ganges.

FIRST STEWARD. The woods were swarming with bayaderes.

THIRD STEWARD. Music was performed night and day by thousands of instruments.

SECOND STEWARD. And the twelve-act dramas; what moral edification!

THIRD STEWARD. Lights, flickering in every hue imaginable, flashed through the forests, and from the mountain peaks, through all dark hours.

FIRST STEWARD. And now he is adored by his people. Larger multitudes, men and women, old and young, poor and sick, never feasted together.

THIRD STEWARD. All the gods were regilded.

SECOND STEWARD. Everybody's portrait was painted gratuitously.

THIRD STEWARD. (*To GAUTAMA.*) Well may astonishment render you silent. Such a miracle of benevolence was unknown before.

SECOND STEWARD. He is too good for this world. He wished

to apply the laws of heaven to ungrateful humanity. Should he ever repent of having squandered everything, he may take my possessions—and yours too, eh !

FIRST STEWARD. Yes, I give in. He was very kind to us.

THIRD STEWARD. As it was he who presented me with those thickly manured fields, my future home enclosed by shady trees, he may sit under them and bouse from the cistern whenever he likes.

SECOND STEWARD. (*To GAUTAMA.*) You would like to know why he did it. He felt a yearning which nothing could satisfy and which robbed all charm from earthy glories and hopes.

FIRST STEWARD. He does not seem interested.

THIRD STEWARD. Do not bother about that fool.

FIRST STEWARD. He must be a little weak-minded.

SECOND STEWARD. The king is coming ! Naked ! He has given away his last robe. Let us weep over his generosity.

The KING enters.

ALL EXCEPT GAUTAMA. We bow before thee, holy man ! We praise thy wisdom's adamantine glory, which gropes in the dark confusion of this world for wisdom's piercing light.

A female child, decorated with jewels and holding a mirror, riding on a lion, is led by.

NAKED KING. Behold this child with the pearl and ruby-rimmed mirror : egotism reflecting truth. Just as the mirror relates to our eyes the occurrences of the surrounding scene, so does the image-forming soul of children dimly reflect the outside world, of which involuntarily they regard themselves the centre. The circle of vision widens as they grow older ; less than ever can they escape from this delusion. We grown-up children, in our self-importance, spend the largest part of our existence in selfish desire and care, longing for objects unattainable which, when attained, produce no happiness, but fresh desire and care. Therefore, it is wisest to reduce our wants to naught. As a king, as the great I am, I could easily follow my heart's desire without transgressing right, let me try if I can also live in bane on the common ways of life.

GAUTAMA. (*Remaining in his earth-lorn attitude.*) Renounce ! Humanity, renounce all confident conviction in yourself ! Struggle for the cessation of sorrow, and become ensouled in me, the Sublime Renunciation, the Non-God !

NAKED KING. (*Makes a stupid face.*)

Fluid silver threads fall slanting from the bowels of the universe, and lightnings tear a fringe of vibrate fire-gold athwart the darkened robe of heaven.

CURTAIN.

SCENE V.

THE LAKE OF INDIVIDUAL ARISTOCRACY.

Sad silence over a lake lost in the solitude of a nobleman's park. Cranes stand amidst high-stalked flowers on the edge of the crystalline water. Swans float dream-like among the white, red and blue lotuses, who, trembling in odorous satiety, lift their immaculate chalices into the musical atmosphere.

NOBLEMAN. (*Robed in virgated violescence, with a dazed and absorbed look, rests in a giant tortoise shell filled with Madhavi blossoms, extending hospitality to the two pilgrims, NINDAR and SUDOTANA, sitting cross-legged. They have paper stripes with Yama, the god of death, fastened to their hempen robes. NINDAR hides a dagger on his hairy chest. Slaves fan them.*) So you have met the genuine Buddha? (*Pilgrims nod.*) And he had such an overwhelming influence upon you, for after all it was he who induced you to change your lives completely. He must exercise a strange hypnotizing influence, that old—how should I name him? I also admired him in former times when his irresistible eloquence made crowds of thousands stand motionless. Nevertheless, I was always of the opinion that he tried to make rather too much of himself. You know he had the trick of carrying blue lights about his person, in a manner as if he himself radiated the light. As for his conceit in letting the sages of the country dispute, whether his mother bore him in a horizontal or vertical position—pshaw! He has also proclaimed that he is god himself. All this, of course, is absurd. Nevertheless, he will be one of the greatest thinkers of all time; perhaps, who can vouch for it, the founder of hundreds of religions. Every millennium a wise man

is born who, with words of truth, strews sand into the brains of all; and they, who anyhow have no time or ability to think, perch parrot-like about, rotting his words. Peculiar are your two theories. You (*turning to SUDOTANA*), to kill all, especially the viable, and throw their corpses into the river by night, so that sailers of the ocean may gaze on them, gnawed by vultures, floating with bloated bellies (*makes a movement of disgust*) away into the dim unknown. And you (to NINDAR), to teach mankind to avoid the nuptial state, thus calling forth the dissolution of the race. You two work hand in hand. If you succeed in preventing birth, and you kill off the living, the world will soon whirl depopulated through the universe. I understand you: you have grown weary of life. As for me, possessing various talents—I sing, write poetry, paint and sculpt a little—I should find life tolerable at least. I can lie for hours and listen to pearls pattering over marble slabs, or to the crackling of silk under old wenches' horny finger-ends. And what delight, to have my languid limbs deluged with oils and wines, each fluid, like each paramour, caressing me in different grades of bliss. Yet, one man, after all, can accomplish so little, even if he ravished earth's nations with ardent swords, or conjured up towers of Babel with despotism's bloody fist. What can we really know! They say the world is an immense ball, circling through space, I believe. I am no astronomer—I must believe in hearsay. Therefore I have perfect right to imagine it an eclipse or a pyramid. And as far as human experience in sorrow is concerned—how insignificant! We cannot even realize what we have experienced. Only the great fireworker may express unconsciously the melancholy of a thousand lives with one fire line piercing the nocturnal sky. I also feel weary at times, for I have neither acquired great wisdom nor keen power of reasoning. I possess but deliquescent intuition; and it teaches me that he is best off who, like the butterfly, injuring not the color or scent of his beloved flowerlets, flies away after sipping the nectar. So I sing, write poetry, paint and sculpt a little. And in regard to joy in living, I can assert without conceit, that I have acquired one rather high-strung preference: I do not receive the same impression of things as other men do; they always consider my impression false, peculiar, vague, or exaggerated; and I feel that, after all—my taste for after-flavors seems superior—is, perhaps, the only true

one—(*Pilgrims shake their heads*) that is the only true one to me—to none else—beautiful, good, sacred is what I experience so ! However, let us have some recreation. (*Beckons.*)

NURVA, the Magi of Odors, dressed in jewels and a veil of black transparency, appears. In her left arm rests a lyre in ivory and gold. She assumes a hieratic attitude, with her right arm makes a mysterious, sweeping gesture through the languid atmosphere, and strikes a few harmonious accords on her instrument. A delicate scent is wafted from her, which changes whenever her right hand repeats the mystic sign and falls like fugitive kisses on the trembling chords. Her performance reveals the psychological wealth of odors, the possibilities of an olfactory art. The melodious colors of perfume subdue the illusion of reality ; and the mind, laden with scent, soars into unknown realms of imagination, where desire alone is law. And in everchanging symphonies the odors suggest all sensations and embrace eternity. In the beginning the Magi suggests in intermingling harmonies the laughter of youth o'er green velvety meadowland, the flowers of subtlest emotions exhaling once more the dividual scents of their violated chalices to the fading sun, or aromatic balms (of vegetable substances) suggesting the silent reveries of night : when human lights extinguish and the moon, pale as if woven by fairy tales, mourns over dark cypress trees ; then paraphrasing on the sweat of labor, the sea of multi-odorous life surges by in bold impressionistic dreams, strewn with the rafters of despair in variations of *ambergris* resembling the colors of Chavannes, ebbing at last on solitary strains of ardent unadulterated smells into timeless meditations over the Nothing, boring deep holes into consciousness—stark still pauses on the wisdom of renunciation—like the acrid, passionless litany of lilies.

During this scene NINDAR has repeatedly scratched himself and plucked his nose ; and SUDOTANA has nervously

groped for his dagger, he now jumps up and stabs the nobleman.

NOBLEMAN. (*Falling out of the shell.*) Is this the way you repay hospitality?

NINDAR. What have you done?

SUDOTANA. Began the mission of my life! (*Stabbing at the attendants who try to seize him; to NINDAR.*) You I allow to live; you are my ally in this work! (*Escapes.*)

NOBLEMAN. Let me try at least to die in as comfortable and picturesque a manner as circumstances allow. (*Holding some perfume to his nose and with the other hand pressing his wound, assumes a theatrical pose.*) Inform my guests, that I beg to be excused, as I am engaged in dying.

The startled cranes wing away in lyric lines from the high-stalked flowers, sighing beneath the melancholy incantations of the wind; the lotuses drown their chalices in the languid undulations of their watery bed; while the swans, shivering, assemble and, in mystic attitudes, fade away into the darkness.

CURTAIN.

SCENE VI.

A BATTLEFIELD.

Sunset changing into cold russet. Long-haired and long-limbed barbarians in leopard skins rob the corpses, lying in every position, distorted and bleeding, of all ornaments of value. Female captives crouch in fear and shame in agonistic outlines against the passive sky. Rows of elephants in the distance.

YOUNG BARBARIAN CHIEFTAIN (*in a gorgeous dress, overloaded with sparkling jewels, and smeared with blood; one foot on the cleft skull of his father*). Like a hissing tide of fire, we coiled devouring through the hostile lines with many a crackling blaze, until they self-oblivious fled, and my infuriated herd of elephants, with spearing tusk and crushing trunk, surged after them and tread the cowards down in murderous rage. Here I have fought my greatest victory! Yet I feel sad, since I have seen that white emaciated loafer—it must have been a buddha. I did not understand the meaning of his murmurings; to me it meant: Why are you raving of immortal glory, if your to-morrow dawns perchance on fate more cruel than your foes' to-night? Why the incessant relentless strife with this old fool? (*Pushes aside the skull with his toes.*) Like youth, I faced the East, garnered my strength from dawn's invigorance; while your red eyes, white bearded man, sought constantly the panorama of the setting sun which blinded you to life's realities. We two, like all, looked upon different worlds, although we stood so close together. A disgust has come over me. I dislike the sharp, bright edge of my barbaric sword. Spoliation, rape and slaughter were my religion hitherto, and with one stroke to split in two a human body its orgasmic

height. Perhaps it was my liking living red; now I want white—the white of human bodies without wounds and scars—and crack from my hands the gore of weeks. (*Muses. The naked King, ornamented with flowers, passes.*) And thou, strange wanderer, I would heap upon thee all the spoils of this year's bordraging, if thou wert not a thousand times more beautiful in the wholeness of thy flawless mould. Oh, could we all live flower-crowned, in sexless beauty, in marble homes, amidst dark foliage, 'neath azure skies!

THE NAKED KING. (*Pursuing his meandering.*) Why hope, date after date, expecting a better day by some change alway; if, at any rate, whatever we try to do will end with the same old fate!

The infamies of war are fading in the crepuscular mist; here and there the jewels on some corpses gleam in the gore of the vanished sun.

CURTAIN.

SCENE VII.

AT THE FOREST EDGE OF LIFE.

To the left an old, dilapidated tent pitched up at the forest edge which, winding itself into the distance, forms a slanting line across the background; between the latter and the foreground a sloping plain. To the right, at the edge of an abyss, a solitary fir tree, from where a wide vista on the surrounding country can be enjoyed. Early evening effect.

ARIYA. (*A lean, ugly, crippled maid at the age of opening buds—her eyes radiate an almost unearthly inward beauty—balancing on her head a large dish with red rice dumplings and carrying a jug filled with curdled milk on her hip, enters, looks about and listens.*) The winds of eventide stray through the forest. The wings of insects sing to nubile buds, husks yield and stamens expand in dewlit depths.

THE WISE OLD MAN. (*Is seen rolling down the sloping plain towards his tent; as he rises he bursts out into an Aristophanic roar of laughter which shakes his whole frame.*) How life is interesting! Ah, Ariya! Why, what saturity; heavy to carry, eh? The nuns of the Huge Convent must really consider me a glutton. There was a time when I could easily manage this in one sitting, but those days of voracity are over; now a dish of rice with a fragrant sauce—I am getting incanescent, Ariya. When I awake in the morning (*draws Ariya on his knees*) I am perfectly stiff. I can't move my joints. They get out of place during the night. I begin to rub, beat, scrape myself all over with a piece of rhinoceros skin, and

gradually I am able to stretch, bend, use my limbs. After dragging about for awhile, cheered, strengthened, I feel more comfortable, and by vespertime I am lively enough to afford myself the pleasure of rolling, sliding, tumbling down this hill. (*Lets Ariya glide from his knee and toddles to the solitary fir tree.*) Oh, you sly rascal, up to your tricks again!

ARIYA. I wonder how you can do it without growing dizzy.

WISE OLD MAN. I have balanced myself long enough over the inconsistent absurdities of life, and I can now well afford to stand firmly at this precipice and this foolish, foolish world.

ARIYA. Interfered with by nobody? How enviable!

WISE OLD MAN. If human beings want to live peacefully they should even beware of friends—grow indurate.

ARIYA. I, then, do not want to be your friend—

WISE OLD MAN. Never so profane a thing. I love you as I love the rocks, the trees, the atmosphere.

ARIYA. For I have only you to go to. Nobody likes me.

WISE OLD MAN. They are your saintly eyes they do not like. They arouse suspicion.

ARIYA. Do you never feel lonesome?

WISE OLD MAN. Lonesome with myself as company? On the contrary, sometimes—to my own humiliation, I confess this stain on my content—I struggle to get away, sneak out from my personality, as everything seems so amusing, so ridiculous to me. I have such fits of laughter that tears gush over my cheeks and I finally fall asleep exhausted. My cup of life is full, overflowing, inexhaustible. The world lies before me like a stage, with a mystery play upon the programme. I espy princely hunts and crowded fairs, religious processions and marching armies, enough to suggest the insoluble problems of existence without being annoyed by its trivialities. From time to time the curtain drops, wrapping me in a cloud of mist, whereupon nature begins anew to tease and tickle me with her inconsequent monstrosities. If it be not a sumptuous psalm of sunset, a drowsy noonday lullaby of heat, or the furious rhythms of a thunderstorm, an inundation or an earthquake may be served to me as an irresistible side-splitting delicacy. What flaring lights pierce through the forest? It reminds me of yesternight. Do you see yonder smoking ruins? A burning village furnished fireworks for me.

An infuriated and lamenting crowd of villagers drag in SUDOTANA by his legs, his head trailing on the ground.

BAWLING OF THE MOB. Justice! Hail to thee, perpetual laughter! We found a dead monkey in our well. We anticipated a croak disaster. It has come. This monster set our village on fire. He is a massacrast. He has robbed us. He has killed us. We, all you see here, are almost dead.

WISE OLD MAN. (*Grins.*) A tragical farce, Ariya. Do not reflect it in tears, my child. The mob is not worthy of such dew.

ARIYA. I feel people's sorrow by the music they exhale.

OLD VILLAGER. They wanted to lynch him—

CROAKING OF THE MOB. Starve him to death!—Skin him alive!—Nail him to a tree!—Cut him in two!—No, cut him in 120 pieces!—At least defer the cuts affecting vital organs to the last!

WISE OLD MAN. Murderer's murderers!

OLD VILLAGER. I, putting my own life in danger, protected him, as we have to be just even to monstrosities. Let us go to the Wise Old Man, I advised, and let him sit judgment on this infandous crime.

WISE OLD MAN. How his gaping wounds encrimson the ground!

OLD VILLAGER. Gaze at this woman. (*Pointing at a woman who holds a singed body in her arms.*) Was it your only child?

WOMAN. Oh, no; if it had been, it would have just killed me. I have lost other children before, but never one like this. (*Kisses the singed body.*) I never knew what death meant.

OLD VILLAGER. Oh, what pain has been suffered on this earth! Why are we created to endure such tortures, which will in twilight hours still reverberate when the sufferers are long dead.

WISE OLD MAN. Why so yond, old yowler?

OLD VILLAGER. Gaze at this old man. (*An old man, stiff as a log of wood, is carried by two villagers to the foreground.*) He was the hoariest man in our village. He had just hundred and seventeen children and grandchildren; one three-legged absurdity among them. They are all burnt; their bodies char under yonder ruins! When he saw his house sway creaking and groaning from side to side, and finally tumble over burying domestic happiness and wealth under a cloud of dust, he seemed to lose all life and stands like a statue ever since.

WISE OLD MAN. You seem to take great relish in such things, old scape-cross ?

SUDOTANA. I am their misjudged benefactor. They should rejoice that I endeavor to shorten their disgusting slavery to nature and each other, instead of maltreating him who despises life.

WISE OLD MAN. Not so much as to annihilate yourself, eh, old scape-cross ?

SUDOTANA. I am doomed to preserve my detestable life; I have still other deedsto do.

WISE OLD MAN. Egregious ! Set him free. He is a superior being: he has a conviction. Don't throp, dear folks, go home without verbosity; you have not lost much, as you never owned, appropriated, adopted ,a conviction. Profit by this zealot incarnation—acquire one.

CRUNCHING OF THE MOB. Shame! Shame! Is this rectitude?—That is beyond me.—At least let him pay a fine.—Why has he the right to commit such an outrage ?

WISE OLD MAN. Because he is more powerful than you. Justice is an empty word; whether he be right or wrong, only one judge can decide: he himself. Whatever you have the power to be, you have the right to do.

BARKING OF THE MOB. Is that so?—Ahem!—You enlighten us!—Let us try ? etc.

An enamored young villager springs panther-like upon the wife of another villager, who enraged stabs him in the back, so that the entangled couple rolls into the abyss.

WISE OLD MAN. Quah-disciple !

SNARLING OF THE MOB (*as they disperse.*) Next time we'll go to the Wise Old Woman who always weeps. I am weary of his umpireship. He is fast getting decrepit; wisdom is passing out of his reach.

WISE OLD MAN. Come, Ariya, let us repose in our flesh.

ARIYA. (*To SUDOTANA.*) What can we do for you ?

SUDOTANA. Untie my ropes.

WISE OLD MAN. Unnecessary labor ! You would fall to pieces.

ARIYA. Why, you are badly hurt.

WISE OLD MAN. Not much left; quite unfleshed.

SUDOTANA. (*Struggles to rise.*) I must go to work. There are still so many living.

(GAUTAMA passes along the forest edge in the distance; his white garment is seen flitting through the tree trunks.)

SUDOTANA. (*Sinks down, staring at the apparition.*)

WISE OLD MAN. Won't you try and take a good dinner, and thereupon let me kick you into the abyss. No? You want to die right here on the spot? (*Scratching his head.*) But, dear friend, imagine what outrageous, pestiferous smells you'll make. We have such scorching nights at this time of the year. Well, as you like, suit yourself. Come, Ariya. (*Sits down before the tent to eat his supper, suddenly bursts out into a roar of laughter.*) How life is interesting!

CURTAIN.

SCENE VIII.

THE VALLEY OF REST.

A road lined with cypress trees descends through a landscape of superb breadth and beauty, towards one of the colossal, highly fantastical palaces of India, lit up with a few soft lights. Early evening effect, varying from a faint lilac green to a deep violet.

GAUTAMA (*enters*). The world with its tumults lies behind me. The battlefields and fighting hosts of yesterday are but indistinct masses in agitated lines. Onward and onward I move to unknown heights. Before I pursue my path, let me rest a few moments in this valley of peace. All here breathes quietude and plentitude, serenity without alloy, untainted with burdening thoughts and woes of transitoriness. My home, my home! In all my errantry for these scores of years, I never found a place so spellfull, seductive, so radiant with bliss, such holy calm as this. The sweet, pure delights of home and love, the charm of wealth and power, glow once more in their alluring lights. They are within my reach. I would be welcomed hack, and yet—how could they give me satisfaction now?

Three maidens draped in lilac, with severe simplicity, seem to float through the still evening air. GAUTAMA stands as if petrified.

FIRST MAIDEN. As we wander homewards, tell me once more the story of the cruel, holy man.

THIRD MAIDEN. I think of it by day and dream of it by night.

SECOND MAIDEN. Listen, then:—It had been a summer day like this, fifty years gone by. The evening was a lovely dream-hipped

maiden like yourself; deepening space was like her flowing robes; the dark clouds like her braided hair; the stars like precious stones adorning beauty. And the Prince, the pride of India, whispered gently: "Yasodhara, dear wife, it is late. Go to rest." She answered with shimmering tears in the chalice of her lotus eyes: "I am alarmed at your sadness of late, oh Prince, my soul of all." He fondled her lovingly, kissing her moist bimba lips: "Let not such anxieties cause you distress." So she went musing to her jasmine-scented couch, nightly embroidered with fresh flowers. With her first born nestling to her bosom—unfastening her hipband in the soft blue charms of night—she fell asleep awaiting the hour when, wrapped in clouds of love, the dreams of life would rain upon her. Yet the Prince did not come to kindle her passion's low-lit flame to seas of lambent fire, for the night of destiny had fallen, which parted him forever from independent will and common joys, to search on supermundane roads perfection in this world. Before meandering forth on moon-steeped paths, the Prince yearned to embrace both mother and child once more; albeit, afraid of awakening them, he merely threw—in the flickering light of the softly swinging lamp—a last glance of farewell and love on all his happiness. The Princess, awakening under the silvery streaks of dawn, finding herself alone with her child beneath the cover of purple and pearl, uncaressed by his delicate roaming hand, sank into a swoon. And though her soft waved limbs recovered weary life, her flower soul was dead to all its former charms. Outside the imposing castle gate, faithful Chandaka mournfully returned, leading his master's fiery steed, neighing loud. It was trapped with golden network and a saddle-cloth blazoned with gold and irised with gems of every fascination, the work of the Princess. But the Prince had become a penniless and despised pilgrim, a homeless self-exile, in search for truth. (*Exit.*)

GAUTAMA. (*Murmurs.*) Yasodhara!—Yasodhara! He who has renounced this is no longer of earthly mould. He is past harm, even if convictions fall away and faith leave him!

Magic silence. The moon rises like a golden chalice from the sea of night.

SCENE IX.

THE CAVE OF DAWN.

To the left, a cave, hollowed out in a steep rock. A path consisting of roughly hewn steps passes its entrance. To the right, a magnificent view on the plains, where aurora is struggling with the mist.

THE FIVE HOLY DISCIPLES, emaciated, with a facial resemblance to Hugo, Whitman, Tolstoi, etc., squat on deer-skins under the arch of the cave's entrance. They have a calm and self-chastised expression, as if they had written the world's history.

SECOND DISCIPLE. (*Eating some herbs and sprouts.*) Here, brother.

FIRST DISCIPLE. Thanks, brother. I put a bag of fertile soil on my stomach only yesterday. It will nourish me for a while. I like to be considerate to all parts of my body and not annoy my bowels unnecessarily.

FIFTH DISCIPLE. True, my wise brother, I have not moved from this spot for three entire months.

FIRST DISCIPLE. I sometimes did not breathe for hours.

FOURTH DISCIPLE. (*Nods.*) What wonderful control we have over ourselves. Stupid humanity would not believe that we have touched neither man nor woman for twenty years.

FIRST DISCIPLE. And never eaten cooked food.

SECOND DISCIPLE. And waited for the rain to take a drink.

THIRD DISCIPLE. Believe me, by appropriating what we renounce, we become thus pure and strong.

FOURTH DISCIPLE. Do not let us talk so much!

FIFTH DISCIPLE. You are right, brother; let us join voices in our morning service, and then meditate on the one great word.

THE FIVE HOLY DISCIPLES. (*Point below and murmur, repeating each sentence three times.*) Vanity! Vanity! Vanity! Stupid, stupid humanity! We, the five only genuine holy disciples of the great Buddha, we do not believe ourselves the centre of the universe. We trust nothing, like and dislike nothing, we desire nothing but to lose our individuality, to dissolve body and soul into Nirvana.

GAUTAMA appears, ascending the steps. Although the disciples have not seen their master for more than twenty years, they show no sign of curiosity.

FIRST DISCIPLE. (*As GAUTAMA approaches.*) Bless you, who made a holy disciple out of a proud despot!

SECOND DISCIPLE. Bless you, who proved to the quondam robber chief that the life of the freest libertine on earth is nothing to that enjoyed by a holy disciple!

THIRD DISCIPLE. Bless you, who prevented a brothel-keeper from further wallowing in the mire!

FOURTH DISCIPLE. Bless you, who taught me the insufficiencies of science, the bliss of uninfluenced monology!

FIFTH DISCIPLE. Bless you, who convinced me that out and inward pain can be overcome by oblivious contemplation!

GAUTAMA. Bless you, and follow me to deny your faith!

THE FIVE HOLY DISCIPLES open their eyes and mouths wide.

GAUTAMA. (*Gives each a few hairs of his beard as objects of worship and smites serenely as he proceeds on his journey.*) Follow me to deny your faith! (*He sneezes as he turns around the corner.*)

THE FIVE HOLY DISCIPLES toss about in hysterical despair.

CURTAIN.

SCENE X.

AT THE BOUNDARY OF PERPETUAL SNOW.

Moonrise o'er mountain peaks, cleaving the mist—which ghost-like floats hither and thither—in various forms and height.

GAUTAMA is reclining on the highest pinnacle. In the distance glimmers the glacial architecture of the Himalaya.

GAUTAMA. Departed spirits of my faith once more, like the majestic moon, rise and move in mighty waves the ocean of my thoughts that lay at rest; not to the tempestuous fury of the past that drove resistless everything before its mighty course, and shattered human creeds like wrecks—merely a last glance of farewell at thy everlasting rise and fall, the grand monotony of life!

Oh, universe within universe, the enigma of thy existence is not cruel, not obscure to me though it has oft tormented me with sleepless agony. A repetition, nothing else:—a ceaseless play of billows of the same chaotic mass!

Just as this body's imperishable dust incessantly rebuilds the phenomena of life, reason and feeling both consist of multitudinous minute forces that, in continual transformation, attract or repulse, inflame or chill, condense or dissolve each other. These forces, wedded to the dust, roam dormant through the universe, until affinity lets them concuss to minor images of the majestic revolution: man.

All the nomadic population of water, earth and air, swarming in flocks or straying alone, even beings too small for the eye of science, all growing things, the flowers indeed, nay, this solid rock, possess soul-atmospheres in inferior states. Incessant concussion during millenniums had to *in* and *evolutionize*, before the breathing of a tenuous leaf became the breath of human eloquence, before acranic

two-holed bellies moved to the highest phase of individual consciousness: a mechanism even freer than the stars that can reflect upon its action and partly influence itself. The human soul with its panurgic zest and obsequious intervals of lethian rest, from where it comes, for which it pines in apathetic absentations of itself, straying through the weird capricious confusions of dreamland, or struggling in sombre estuaries of insanity's sea!

By parents, manifold and cruel, the germs of our life are shed in the fields of infancy and youth; changing their substance ceaselessly, each turgescient plant, fed by all affinity can draw from chaos' surging sea, unfolds unwillingly its individual zest with soaring trunk and leafy wilderness; its fruitage falling more or less complete according to the skill, that curbs the fire fluids as they intercourse. There are souls swooning away as noonday love and glare dissolve their overheated sheath; and there are others, burning fiercely in calm intensity, until the inward fire has consumed the mortal web maintaining it.

How frail and fugitive is life! Oh, magic friend, thy vernal radiance caresses the outlines of this wasted form, still garrulous with itself as in the nights of yore,—a repetition of remembered love.

So circling time reiterates the tasks of nations and of men. Soul forces of ancestral times, currenting in unknown spheres, spinning in rhythmical curves, perchance, around some sun and influencing other conscious growths, suddenly return to human habitations to reflect the vice and glory of dead ages. Still sapient men of science ponder how reveries of sounds or color spread like pestilence through public taste.

Ye, forgermen of futurity, who will desolate your accidental sways as sages, warriors, and martyrs, how much, as I preceding captors, you'll resemble me—before whom other buddhas darken as the stars' variegation before the greenish yellow of the sun. (*Laughs softly.*) Our pabulation consisted of the same magnetic forces that command the instincts of the human herd.

Sensitive persons,—lovers of thy perlaceous pallidity, mate of my vanished dreams—in foolish weakness or emotion deep as the sun-dering white and dark blue sea, never overcome the loss of friendship and of love, because the soul of the departed one has left in them a part whose love lures cannot be extinguished; again, again,

tenaciously they call when crushed by joyful hours or the healing antidotes of time.

As the visage of a child reflects the faces it has seen, elective pairs remaining lovers, grow alike in manner and construction as in the realm of reason and susceptibilities, for already in their first meeting, through a word or glance, a movement of the body or the soul, they shoot into each other a restless longing to complete each other in that sublime concussion which produces birth, the creative talent of the mob.

But ye, poor world-wide artists, fashioned in heaven and hell, you have absorbed too deep a share of universal heat! Its vehement radiation must repulse the multitude. Do ordinary mortals ever fathom the hungry depths of a creative soul!—perchance, in sunbeam hours of maternal sacrifice, in twilight broodings of despair, or nights of jealous rage. Life's gorges are too shallow for intensity of joy in pain; its waters, rebelling, rush to unknown limits and, inundating, rise into oblivion. I pilgered lonesome through this desert-dream, and now sit solitary on this mountain peak beyond myself.

Temple of redemption, redundant with bardic melodies of form, the rainbow's fragrant measures, with monuments of thought, and odorous hues of sound, thy white and sacred messengers of faith, rising phoenix-like from beauty's sacred flames, sun-soaring, resuscitate with every beat of wings the inspiration of thy Artist Gods! Their deeds redeem mortality, in their time-outliving power to vibrate the imponderable into the inner world of man; and scattered love, throughout the universe transfigured, draws all affinities beneath her despot ban.

Who knows if one spark cannot call its brother from the stars with a decillion-fold rapidity of light!

Oh, thousand moments—in a high strung life—of exquisite joyful pain, can you redeem the other plight, the blank monotony over which the unconscious sheds its sere sardonic light! It is in vain, it is in vain the parasites of earth must wander forth to bane in endless discontent the inconsistencies of fate.

Even devotion, wooed by necessity and circumstance, lets her convictions glide away, time-pleasing considers them from other centres, until suddenly, in the tenebrious hour of death, doubt darts to the surface with appalling vehemence, breaking through all the

stratas of persuasion and appeasement which have overgrown it, and reestablishes the old faith triumphant on waning lips.

In the final restoration, that queer riddle, which in curious trepidation all to solve solicit, old age, disease, or accident: the trinity of death loosens some threads of life's variegated web; the broken garment falls, the shivering soul dissolves, and currents of invisible sparks, forever dead, forever living, flow slumbering from sleep to sleep.

And so, what men call history, ever onward thunders: one life is launched, the other sinks, generations come and go, new nations blossom forth and rot, new worlds are born and die, new agencies of existence may originate when forces conquer consciousness without—Come, mists, in tender wildness also wrap this solitary peak within your ghostly veils.

.
 It is growing cold ! Yasodhara,
 let me fold Nirvana's mantle around your moonlit shoulders.

The mists wind higher and higher, until all peaks have disappeared and the scene appears like a nebulous sea, on whose distant shore the summits of the Himalaya glow like a huge crystallized fairy castle.

CURTAIN.

SCENE XI.

SUMMIT OF THE HIMALAYA.

Summit of the Himalaya. Its imposing peaks are sharply outlined against the bluish-black sky. Snow whisperings.

GAUTAMA. (*With long, white, flowing hair and beard, in a plain white garment, enters this scene of white. It begins to snow.*) At last! At last! As far and near as human beings can approach forgetfulness on earth.

Nothing sinks into Everything.

Deep under me, wrapped in the misty garments of everlasting night, lies human vanity.

On this altar of untrodden snow I now deny my faith, the only thing I trusted here on earth.

This mighty urn, from which the sublimest of all renunciations flows, what is it but an empty cavity through which chaos' lawless currents howl to unknown measures. Human thoughts—a hand of snow—like fragile flowers dreaming forlorn on rigid, icy heights, destined to die if they relume in other spheres. Perhaps you understand me better than I you. How can I ever know what agitations thrill through this white conglomeration at my feet!—Beyond this universe, embracing infinite eternity with every spot in space as centre, may there not be beyond the outermost, beyond the innermost, somewhere, Something creating worlds without the laws that men consider there.

Come, Deodunga, tear your labyrinthian roots.

of fire out from this vainglorious earth, to evanescent fragments shattered; soar as my crystal chariot into space, with sun and moon as fleeting steeds, with reins of stars in bridle hand, and comets for darkness breaking whip, cleave this paltry universe in two, revealing realms man never knew!

(*It begins to snow more heavily.*—GAUTAMA lies down to sleep upon the snow.)

Death, gentle death, queen of beauty, benefactress of mankind, come with thy soft, white wing and fondly fold me in thy arms. Since my birth I often felt thy cool, refreshing breath fanning my weary limbs, but cruel thou always passedst by and left me to my earthly sufferings. Now, at last I can rest at thy white breast and slumber peacefully without hope and dreams.

This is the end; the momentary trance will cease; the dream of soul inflations from god's bourn has past. I may awake to something else which I have never left as I was never here. It was a play, ridiculous and sad, enacted in my whimsical self. . . . All is non-existent.

(*Snowstorm.*)

Body and soul, farewell for ever! If you can, impregnate other unconscious melodies with houndless bliss.

Gusts of snowflakes move to and fro, weaving a winding sheet for Buddha, under which he disappears from the eyes of humanity, like all of us, one after the other, as if we had never existed.

To Students of Color Psychology.

SCENE XII.

DARKNESS IN SPACE.

Poetical license imagines that, at Buddha's entering Nirvana, a color reverie takes place in the universe.

This scene, a concert of self-radiant colors, is to be represented by pyrotechny, brought by chemistry, electricity and future light-producing sciences to such perfection and beauty that it becomes the new Optic Art, in which Color will rival Sound as a vehicle of pure emotion.

SCENE—Bluish-black darkness in space : a minute section of the universe, represented by a stage of at least 800 yards length and 500 yards height and depth.

I. Out of darkness the earth, in the ban of the sun and followed by her pallid paramour the moon, ever revolving rolls majestically forward, displaying the phenomena of a lunar and solar eclipse, and growing larger and larger until she has become so large that one can discern: the ultramarine of the oceans, the glaucous of the steppes, the pallid gold of the deserts, the crystal fretwork of the poles and glaciers, and here and there the dark fly-specks of the largest cities, which become scintillant as the other colors fade in earthly night. It impresses the beholder like the colossal ideal of human vanity and then rolls backwards into darkness.

II. Confused tumbling of meteors through space — a symbol of man's life, propelled from some unknown bourn and rushing to

some unknown goal, proving its momentary existence merely by a luminous line, lit and extinguished without change of course. The meteors, varying continually in the rhythm of entrance and exit, mobility, richness and intensity of fire, shoot forth in every direction, also in every possible angle, towards the audience.

III. Incessant rain of luminous stellar dust, in the midst of which a battle of stars, comets, planets with rings and satellites, takes place. They rush towards each other, and recede, encircle each other and create endless variations of figures. Now and then stars crush into each other with a great explosion of fire, unite into larger stars and, continuing their course, emit a light produced by a combination of their colors when separate. Suddenly the stars grow larger and larger, the smaller ones disappearing behind the larger, until a few dozens have reached the diameter of 50 yards, who in turn repeat a crescendo of concussions. An orange and a blue star collide and form a still larger one radiating a greenish light of painful hope. A roseate and blue star also collide to a violet glow of melancholy bliss. Thereupon these two collide, and before they grow into one, all the other stars crush into them, causing an incandescent firebrand that radiates the entire space with its irisating light. This fire wall is suddenly cleft in two, and in innumerable hues and palpitations melts away in "diminuendo".

IV. The lower ($\frac{1}{4}$) part of the stage represents the sea of chaos over which by some caprice the light effects of an earthly day, from a bloodred dawn to a moonlit night, are performed in color gradations of subtlest purity, accompanied by descriptive music.

Intermezzo, entitled "Alhambra Arabesques." In succession the famous patterns in luminous gold, blue and faded red, interlace, overlap, and link each other before the eyes of the audience, and finally change into an improvisation of new designs of the same character. (For other intermezzos the author suggests "The Shattered Jewel Casket," "Flowers growing in Cloudland," etc.)

V. A kaleidoscopic symphony of color effects continually changing in elation and depression, velocity, intensity, variety and

sentiment, continually developing and composing new forms and designs, not merely of mathematical symmetry, but also as suggested from the endless constructions, textures, phenomena revealed in astronomy, microscopy, mineralogy, geology, paleontology, etc., beginning with a *Lhargetto* in light bluish-grey, muddy yellowish-green, greenish-blue and dark greyish-blue; followed by an *Andante* in color containing blue from green to purple; by an *Allegretto* of complimentary colors with a tendency towards yellow and red; and by a *Finale vivace* in all colors, ending at last with a flower star, emitting rocket like fire lines, trills, radiations of various propelling power, at first paraphrasing in the colors of the solar spectrum, and at last improvising an outburst of new colors, like ultra red and violet, for which optical instruments have first to be invented before the human eye can perceive and enjoy them.



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